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Direction

for the 1990s

Northwest Territories Canada

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GOVERNMENT LEADER'S INTRODUCTION

In December, 1987, shortly after being chosen by the Legislative Assembly, the new Cabinet met at Snare Rapids to begin making long-term plans for our future. Clear directions were needed to meet the economic and social challenges faced by the Northwest Territories. This document, entitled "Direction 1990s", spells out our decisions.

This new direction is made up of five parallel and equal elements of economic and political development, woven together by the underlying themes of participation, development and self-reliance.

Northerners are committed to consultation and consensus. Throughout our society, we encourage everyone to take part in making decisions. Nowhere is this more important than in making decisions about how we develop, whether that development is social, economic or political.

The first step is to reach a northern consensus on how to build our economy. We know that our government is only one participant in political and economic change. Decisions made by individuals, businesses, communities, aboriginal organizations and the federal government all help set our course as well. Setting this direction for public policy provides the framework within which our government will act and the other participants can respond and interact.

A just claims settlement will give aboriginal people the structures and resources they need to build self-reliance, and will create the economic and political security in which development can benefit all Northerners.

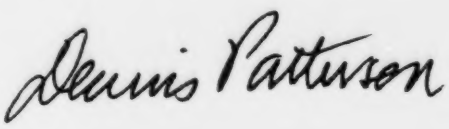
Harnessing the tremendous energy which exists today in the North will allow us to move towards self-reliance, both political self-reliance for our territory and economic self-reliance for individuals.

Our focus on economic and political development does not mean we have forgotten about health and social programs. We need to build strong families and communities and solve problems such as alcohol and drug abuse and family violence, and we will do that by strengthening our existing programs. Our ability to do this will be influenced by the renegotiation and enhancement of our formula financing agreement with the federal government.

"Direction 1990s" does not describe all our activities, nor does it just add to our government's current mandate. It forms the framework for our decisions about our current and future programs and policies.

Government's resources are never unlimited. Currently, our territorial resources are seriously restricted. Government's role is to provide a climate within which people can prosper, using their own resources and initiative to solve problems. To create that climate, we need a plan which will let us make the best possible use of our limited resources and provide a basis for the difficult decisions which lie ahead.

This document is the first step in developing a blueprint for the future of the Northwest Territories. Our directions will be reviewed and refined in further strategy sessions over the next months and years. Advice from the Legislative Assembly and the public is essential for us to develop and refine these directions.



Dennis Patterson
Government Leader

STIMULATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Our political and social development depends on economic growth. Broadening our economy's foundation and building on our strengths will help us solve our society's problems. Settling land claims will create the stability needed for development and give aboriginal people the resources to be full partners in the economy. All Northerners will benefit from the self-reliant economy and society which we build together.

Developing a Broader Foundation

The government's role is to provide a foundation for the growth of individuals and businesses and to foster a climate which will encourage that growth. In the next four years, the Government of the NWT will break down barriers to economic development by focusing on Northern control of energy; improving the Northern transportation network; re-shaping financial support to business; and directing government spending, especially for construction projects, so that it helps build local economies.

Northern Control of Energy

Having Northerners take over control of NWT energy resources and their development from the federal government is one of our major objectives. Taking over the Northern Canada Power Commission is an important step towards that goal. Of even greater long-term importance will be a Northern Energy Accord which will allow our government to manage oil and gas activities in the same way as provincial governments. The Accord will open up a potentially significant source of revenue to support economic development and other important initiatives throughout the NWT. Participation by aboriginal groups will be crucial to the success of these negotiations.

Energy costs make it expensive to do business in the NWT. We will look for ways to cut energy costs by promoting conservation and by replacing expensive imported southern supplies with our own energy resources. Using waste heat, wood fuel and our own oil, gas and coal reserves all offer opportunities in this area.

A Northern Transportation System

Our lack of adequate roads, airports, docks and harbours handicaps our economic growth. A better transportation system will create opportunities for mining, tourism, fishing, trade and travel between communities. Building, operating and maintaining new transportation routes and facilities will create jobs for years to come.

Our government will look for new ways to deal with transportation issues. We will seek to develop joint federal-territorial policies to cut transportation costs for NWT businesses and consumers. We will seek continued devolution of highway, airport and marine programs from the federal government so that our government will have greater control over this important part of our economy.

Recognizing that the cost of building an adequate Northern transportation system is beyond our current resources, our government will seek additional federal funds so that we can improve our transportation system over the long term.

As well as improving services, extending the highway system, devolving the Eastern Arctic sealift, and building better airports, docks and harbours will give many native communities a chance for fuller participation in the territorial economy.

Support for Northern Business

In a developing economy, new businesses need access to capital and often need financial and technical help to get started. The wide variety of territorial and federal programs aimed at meeting this need should be consolidated and co-ordinated so that businesses have support and the economy receives the maximum benefit.

Our government will consolidate our programs of grants, contributions and loans, and we will ask the federal government to merge its funding programs into a single agency for northern development, created in co-operation with the business community. We also will work with the private sector to improve northern business access to conventional financing sources such as banks and investment funds.

In the past, new businesses often needed grants and contributions to get on their feet. Our business community has grown. Now businesses need improved support programs to help them become self-reliant. In future, our programs will focus more on loans and less on grants and contributions. However, we will continue to pay attention to the needs of new businesses, particularly in developing communities, for help in obtaining equity.

No matter what type of support is given, programs will have clear eligibility criteria which focus on economic "winners" and will promote sectors of the economy identified as priorities by the government. But while we emphasize long-term viability and job-creation potential, that will not rule out support for some activities, particularly in the renewable resource sector, which may not be economically viable in themselves, but which contribute to future economic development.

New Approaches to Construction

Our economic strategy will make sure that when our government spends money, northerners receive as many jobs and business opportunities as possible. The Business Incentive Policy will be revised to encourage new investment and the creation of new northern businesses. Government purchasing will be used to support the small business service sector.

Government projects will be implemented in a way which provides the most opportunities for northern and local employment and business. Construction contracts will be tendered, as much as possible, on the basis of northern and local involvement. Projects will be broken into smaller components and completed over a longer time, if necessary, so that communities get the maximum benefits from government projects. Greater local participation also may be provided through more involvement by community councils in managing projects.

Building on Strengths

While the NWT's rich natural and human resources offer us a wide range of economic projects, we need to concentrate on the opportunities within our grasp. Over the next four years, our economic strategies will concentrate on import substitution programs; small-scale renewable resource development; expanding our tourism and cultural industries; and gaining greater control over our economy's non-renewable sectors through the Northern Accord negotiations and devolution process.

Import Substitution

Rather than always bringing goods and services into the NWT, we want to increase our use of goods produced in the North. This will create jobs and business opportunities, reduce our reliance on southern imports, and in the long-term, encourage the use of our resources to process and manufacture goods here in the NWT.

Renewable Resources

Developing renewable resources means more than just using wildlife for food and fur. It also means developing new ventures in agriculture, forestry, the fishery, aquaculture and small-scale export of water and ice.

Commercial development requires management systems based on sustainable yield and developed in consultation with aboriginal peoples whose interests are directly affected. Our government will continue to develop these systems. Now that the NWT has charge of forestry management, we will seek control over fisheries management and involvement in intergovernmental fisheries decisions.

Before developing commercial or export uses, we must protect traditional domestic use of resources and expand our use of these resoruces to replace imports. Our schools, hospitals and correctional centres, for example, will make greater use of country foods. Adequate inspection services are needed to protect public health and consumer confidence.

In making resource use and management decisions, a primary goal will be to allow people and communities to develop renewable resources as a source of income and job opportunities and to build renewed pride and purpose in the traditional way of life.

Many job opportunities will be small-scale and community-based. Trade among communities will be encouraged, as will processing and manufacturing on a limited scale when and where these are viable. Business support programs will be aimed at promoting viable ventures.

Developing the renewable resource economy in small communities offers a way to increase individual self-reliance and reduce dependence on social assistance. Hunters and trappers are important to the NWT economy and society. Our government will work with the federal government to find ways to use welfare funds to create an income support system for them so that a career on the land is a viable option, not a last resort.

Tourism and Culture

Our northern cultures are something to be proud of and to share with visitors. Culture and tourism will lead to more jobs and businesses as travellers discover the range of adventures and experiences which the North offers.

Facilities and attractions will be developed which reflect cultural and historical themes and add to the activities tourists can take part in during their Northern visits. A new strategy for developing and promoting Northern arts and entertainment will recognize their tourism potential while helping to support and preserve cultural traditions.

We will pay more attention to the arts and crafts industry, finding new ways to develop the industry and helping it to take advantage of Northern and southern market opportunities.

Oil, Gas and Minerals

Non-renewable resources will be an important part of the NWT economy. But we should not rely heavily on it for stable long-term development as too many factors outside our control make this sector prone to boom and bust cycles. We must be ready to take advantage of projects as they materialize during the next decade, expected to be one of intense mining and oil and gas activity. Our ability to do this will depend on negotiating the Northern Accord on Energy with the federal government.

We want to be prepared for future pipeline and other large-scale developments. Our government will draw up plans to take advantage of job and business openings, identifying training needs and obtaining the necessary powers (through legislation and devolution of management and regulatory authorities) to manage such developments effectively.

Mining will play an important role in the NWT's future. Our government will work with the mining industry to develop an effective long-term strategy to assist and promote this part of our economy. We intend to acquire from the federal government the authority and resources we need to manage northern mineral development.

Developments in the non-renewable resource sector will affect the rights and interests of aboriginal people in land and resources. Thus, aboriginal organizations must be involved in discussions leading to the creation of management regimes.

Achieving Self-Reliance

Our government's new economic plan aims to develop our most important resource — our people. We want to ensure Northerners more access to employment and business ventures. We will identify existing jobs in mining, transportation, communication and the hospitality industry, now held by southern residents, which Northerners could be helped to fill. Northerners deserve every opportunity to work for their own government, and we will strive to hire more Northerners at all levels of the public service.

New jobs will be created by our new economic strategies. Better education and training programs, more closely attuned to our economy's current and future needs, are required if Northerners are to take advantage of existing opportunities and new opportunities as they arise. Developing and carrying out such programs is another major goal of our government.

IMPROVING EDUCATION

The Special Committee on Education called on the education system to give NWT residents training to secure employment. While we have made progress, many northern residents still lack adequate skills. Northerners must be better prepared to take advantage of the existing jobs now held by southern residents and of new jobs that will be created. Education and training programs geared directly to employment are vital if we are to meet this goal.

Training for Present Opportunities

Education and training levels affect the ability of adult Northerners to fill existing jobs or get new jobs. Many residents could not go to school and get the basic education needed for wage employment. For many people, this is a problem which represents a major barrier to self-reliance.

Enhancing Basic Skills

Building on our existing educational programs, we will develop and implement a comprehensive plan to raise the education level of our adult population through a "Literacy" campaign and other community-based programs involving both educators and the public.

Meeting the needs of residents who are most disadvantaged in the economy will require innovative uses of social service programs and funds. The continued agreement and co-operation of the federal government in using cost-shared funds and programs will be needed to do this.

On one hand, new ways must be found to support those who want to continue hunting and trapping on the land. One option that will be explored is to redirect funds from social assistance into comprehensive income support programs for renewable resource harvesters.

For people who want to work in the wage economy, on the other hand, social assistance programs will be used to assess abilities and provide life-skill and job readiness training needed to get a job. These programs also might be adapted to give individuals the financial support and counselling they need to move into the work-force.

Matching Skills to Opportunities

We need to help people match their job skills with job opportunities. In consultation with the private sector, our government will develop labour market information systems to identify available and potential jobs and the skills required and then to match those openings with the skills of people in the workforce.

Individuals will be helped and encouraged to identify, apply for and obtain jobs in their communities or in other parts of the NWT. While our economic strategy will focus on creating jobs where people live, we also will encourage people to move to locations where work is available.

Older adults who want to enter the workforce for the first time will receive help through the development of new training and apprenticeship programs geared to the needs of older students. Cook and chef training for the institutional and commercial use of country foods is one opportunity which has already been identified.

Shifting our training emphasis to better meet our economy's needs requires a co-ordinated effort involving both governments and the private sector. Current territorial programs for employment development will be reviewed and new approaches considered. Federal programs that can be accessed will be integrated with our efforts. In some cases, we will seek the transfer of federal employment development programs such as Northern Careers through the devolution process.

Education for Future Challenges

The school system remains the most important tool for preparing Northerners for employment. Our government is committed to developing a long-term education strategy which makes sure students have the skills to take advantage of career and business opportunities in all sectors and at all levels of the NWT economy. We will continue to expand guidance programs, and we will base curriculum development and career counselling for students on present and future labour market information.

Career Paths for the Future

In education, we will offer students a number of career options or paths. As well as training students in the trades, clerical and service options, our schools also will prepare young people for traditional occupations, entrepreneurship and professional careers.

The traditional lifestyle offers a viable option for the future. Programs will be developed to help students gain these skills while obtaining the basic education needed for other jobs. More extensive than today's cultural inclusion programs, these programs will recognize that culture includes language, northern history, and arts and crafts as well as hunting and trapping skills. Such skills cannot be taught only in the classroom, so limited extension programs on the land will continue to be created for students.

Students need to learn technical and management skills and business values and attitudes if they are to take full advantage of the economic opportunities created in the field of small business. Tapping the skills of the NWT business community, our government will develop awareness programs for delivery in schools and post-secondary institutions.

Increasing numbers of Northerners must be able to obtain scientific, technical and professional education so that they can take advantage of careers at all levels of society. As well as continuing our support for Northerners attending colleges and universities, we will seek new ways to encourage and promote excellence in the school system.

Support to Students and Parents

No educational system can succeed if students do not stay in school. An expanded community counsellor program will encourage students to attend school regularly and to stay in school. We will expand support to students through personal, peer and family counselling and guidance programs.

Parents must become more involved in educating their children. We will promote public awareness of the value of education, and develop new approaches to increase parental participation. Supporting parents to support their children in schools is an important long-term goal of our government.

Effective Schools

To achieve these goals and make sure that our educational system contributes fully to community and economic development, our schools must be effective. Community education plans, a principal training program and a system of school, principal and teacher evaluation will be developed and implemented. Maintaining and enhancing educational standards will be a major focus of these plans. Public control over education will continue to grow so that local people can help design program delivery to meet their communities' needs.

SHAPING PUBLIC GOVERNMENT

Over the past 20 years, our government has evolved into a Cabinet system of government with many province-like powers and responsibilities. Although the Meech Lake Accord has set back our constitutional aspirations, the devolution process and various constitutional and political initiatives offer the promise of continuing progress over the next few years.

Our government is unique in that it is based on consensus decision-making and public participation and consultation. That has led to the creation of many special purpose committees, societies and boards at the community level, in addition to and often independent of elected municipal and community governments. These bodies have reduced the effectiveness and control of elected community councils, placed overwhelming burdens on individual community leaders, and made the process of governing the NWT more difficult and less efficient. The addition of a variety of regional boards and bodies further complicates this already complex government system.

Government cannot continue to grow in this way without a clear vision of the future shape of public government in the Northwest Territories. Our government will establish a framework which includes measures to speed the federal devolution process; clarifies the relationship between our government, regional bodies and community governments; simplifies the form and operation of government; and strengthens Ministerial government while enhancing local control.

In developing this plan, we will make sure it supports aboriginal rights and reflects participation guarantees set out in land claims settlements. Our actions will not prejudice any future division of the NWT, although this is an issue which must be resolved largely in other forums.

Greater Territorial Self-Reliance

We will seek further province-like powers and authorities from the federal government over the next 12 to 18 months, given the strong federal mandate to proceed with devolution. We want to move quickly on transferring NCPC and negotiating the Northern Accord on Energy. The Accord will provide new sources of revenue, reducing our dependence on Ottawa and increasing our ability to meet out economic and social goals.

A general framework agreement with the federal government will set out the rules for transferring further programs and will speed up the process. Completing the Health transfer and negotiating resource management functions are vital, but we also want to see transportation and job creation programs transferred. We intend to take over federal research buildings and programs in the North as a base for developing appropriate northern technologies in energy use, construction and processing of resources. These facilities and programs also will build on Arctic College's activities.

While there is a limit to the pace at which programs can be transferred, we will set our sights high and attempt to obtain as many additional powers, authorities and programs as is feasible.

Receiving transfer of enough resources for our territorial needs is an important part of devolution. The framework agreement will set out ways of identifying and negotiating all program resources in future transfers. At the same time, we will seek additional new resources in areas where existing federal programs are not sufficiently funded or developed to meet NWT needs, particularly in the area of transportation. Our transportation infrastructure lags far behind that anywhere else in Canada and must be improved.

Involving aboriginal organizations throughout the devolution process is vitally important. By developing agreements with NWT aboriginal groups to provide participation in designing public management structures, we will be able to make sure our public institutions reflect guarantees included in claims agreements.

Effective Community Participation

In dealing with the many special purpose bodies at the community level, our government will look for ways to promote elected community governments as the prime public bodies at the local level. This will create strong local authorities which better represent local interests, and promote effective and efficient use of government resources at the community level. Development of the prime public body concept will be phased in with full consultation with community governments.

As prime public bodies, community governments will gradually absorb most Government of the NWT sponsored community bodies and territorial government programs transferred to the local level. A new policy will identify community governments as the primary target for the transfer of government programs. While there may be exceptions such as housing programs because of the joint ownership of public housing with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, our government will work towards including housing programs within the prime public body concept.

Hunters and Trappers Associations may have to be excluded from this concept because of the important management role they may play after land claims are settled and because their focus is generally outside the community. But they should work closely and co-operatively with community governments.

Emphasizing community governments requires a review of regional structures including both our government's regional administrative structures and the role of regional bodies such as Regional and Tribal Councils, Divisional Boards of Education and Regional Health Boards. The review of Regional and Tribal Councils will be an important part of a more comprehensive study of regional structures and their relationship to our government and to community governments.

Future public government structures will include strong Cabinet government at the territorial level and strong community governments at the local level. In between will be resource management structures jointly formed by our government and aboriginal groups through claims and devolution, with mechanisms for community representation. There also may be various regional structures whose authority comes from the community level and which increase local control and participation while maintaining our government's control of territorial-wide policies and priorities.

SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL INITIATIVES

Last year's failure to reach a national consensus on entrenching aboriginal rights in the Canadian Constitution deeply disappointed Northerners. The disappointment was particularly deep because, over the past five years, government and aboriginal peoples in the North have been able to work together on joint initiatives for mutual benefit. Our record of success holds out the hope that, by drawing aboriginal peoples into the mainstream of our economy and government, we can create the solutions that the rest of Canada could not achieve.

Land Claims

The settlement of land claims will be one of the most important developments in the NWT's history. Northern aboriginal people will gain control of their own destiny, and will be guaranteed participation in managing the resources which are most important to them. We will work with aboriginal organizations to create public government structures through devolution where these guarantees can be realized. The claims settlements will give aboriginal people the resources to be full partners in development and will provide the political and economic certainty within which that development can thrive.

It is urgent that the two northern claims be settled before the mandate of the present federal government and its negotiators expires. Land claims negotiations are primarily between the Government of Canada and aboriginal people. But our government will expand its efforts to see agreements in principle reached for both claims within the next 12 to 18 months. Historically, we have been part of the federal negotiating team, taking part in discussions and helping to find solutions. While useful, this role has sometimes limited our ability to move negotiations forward.

We will weave our principles and positions into a policy which increases our role as a facilitator and relates land claims to such political development initiatives as devolution. Our policy will be carried out in a flexible and pragmatic way, acceptable to aboriginal people. With the agreement of the two negotiating parties, we will take every reasonable step to ensure that claims can be settled as soon as possible.

Building Bridges

While the Northwest Territories is made up of many groups and communities, often with distinctly different interests and values, one of our great strengths is that these diverse groups can and do work together to achieve consensus. Our society's diversity is only a problem if we make it a problem. Instead, we can welcome our diversity as a creative force which brings us together to develop common solutions that benefit us all.

The relationship between government and aboriginal organizations in the North has occasionally been passively supportive and static. Our government wants to make this relationship dynamic and positive. Linking land claims and devolution to create public management structures which reflect claims' guarantees of aboriginal participation is one possible positive result at the territorial level. The new Charter Communities Act also allows Band and Municipal forms of government to be brought together at the community level.

Supporting Traditional Activities

Developing the renewable resource sector is a key part of our economic strategy. We plan to find new ways to enhance the vitality of traditional harvesting activities and lifestyles which contribute so much to our cultural, economic and social life. Our decisions about resource management and development will reflect the traditional knowledge which can be found in our Northern communities.

Placing emphasis on opportunities in arts and crafts and traditional entertainment will diversify our economy while supporting aboriginal cultures. Recognizing the "traditional career" as a viable economic option for individuals, and enhancing our teaching of northern culture and history in the schools also will help support traditional activities.

Our government will continue to support and assist aboriginal groups in promoting and preserving their traditional ways of life through national and international forums.

TAKING OUR PLACE IN CANADA AND THE WORLD

As we carry out all these tasks, the Northwest Territories will increasingly assert its rightful place in Canada and in the international community.

The North is Canada's last frontier, but we are not isolated. The northern frontier is an exciting place of creativity and innovation. While the rest of our country may have been slow to recognize this, the rest of the world has not.

Our Place in the World

The Northwest Territories is a full participant in the circumpolar world. Our people and our government are leading actors in many of the events and issues which shape international polar activities.

Senior officials of our government hold two of the four Canadian committee chairs set up under the Canada/USSR Arctic Sciences Exchange Program, an information exchange program established in 1984 which is an important part of Canada's relationship with the Soviet Union. While we have much to learn from each other, exchanges under this program have shown that our government is well ahead of the USSR in developing northern construction and some aspects of education.

Our government also plays an important role in environmental issues. The Government of the NWT is part of the Canadian delegation to the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna and is a full member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. We are active in international efforts to prepare a Circumpolar Conservation strategy. Canada's Polar Bear Management program, largely developed by our government, was praised as a leading international example of wildlife management at a recent conference on sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

Our government has taken a lead role in dealing with issues which Justice and Education must face in a northern setting. We have hosted, and will continue to host, conferences on these topics which bring together representatives from governments in Alaska, Yukon, Greenland and polar nations around the world.

Northerners have much to gain from these exchanges, and the NWT will continue to be a leading participant in the circumpolar world. Our government will continue to assist aboriginal groups such as Indigenous Survival International which are taking lead roles in promoting aboriginal interests throughout the world. We applaud such outstanding achievements as last year's display of traditional and modern ways of life at the British Museum in London.

International links also have been actively developed by the private sector. Our government will help northern businesses explore economic opportunities and overseas markets for our products. We also will look for new ways to promote the Northwest Territories internationally as an exciting tourism destination, and attract international investors to work with northern residents in developing our economy.

Taking Our Place in Canada

The Meech Lake Accord, if adopted, will make it more difficult for northern territories to achieve provincial status. While Northerners are disappointed that its drafters ignored northern interests, we remain confident that some accommodation of our interests can be made. Our government will continue its efforts to persuade the federal and provincial governments to amend the Accord.

This setback, however, will not stop our progress in developing a more responsible government better able to meet our citizens' needs. To achieve our goal, we will build on our record of co-operation, negotiation and discussion with the federal government. The devolution process will provide a way to reach our political and social goals, and the formula financing agreement, a model for intergovernmental co-operation in Canada, will be renegotiated during the life of our government.

We will review our intergovernmental affairs programs to find new and better ways to improve our relations with the federal government and the provinces and to raise the NWT's profile nationally. We will seek participation in the few Federal-Provincial meetings in which our government does not already play a full and active part. These actions will help our government build a stronger and more equal relationship with our federal and provincial counterparts.

Assuring Canada's sovereignty in the North is an important federal priority, being exercised through increased military activity in the form of construction of the North Warning System, Forward Operating Locations, a Polar 8 icebreaker and the purchase of nuclear submarines. Our government feels that establishing a political, social and economic presence, achieved by Northern self-reliance and full Northern participation in making economic and political decisions, is as important as this military presence.

A fraction of the money to be spent on assuring sovereignty through military means would help build the transportation network needed for our economic well-being. As well as sovereignty, Canada would gain a strong and viable northern territory and access to the land's rich resources. This Canadian investment in the future, added to advances in our status as a partner in Canada, would give Northerners the chance to take part in and benefit fully from our country's economic and political life.

SETTING REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Our goal in setting directions for the 1990s is to develop economically, politically and socially in a way which encourages Northerners to participate fully in achieving self-reliance. We want to stimulate a stable but diverse economy, run by and for Northerners, and to build a strong and democratic society in which all our residents are equal partners.

Northern Control

Greater control over our own destiny is the core of each of the five elements of our plan. Our economic strategy is based on the sectors of our economy over which we have most control, while recognizing that we must expand such control by seeking further province-like powers. Northerners will only be fully in control of our society when we have the necessary skills and knowledge to take part fully in our government and our economy. Control over our political destiny will be achieved by the settlement of land claims, completing the structures of public government and asserting our rightful place in Canada and the world.

Co-operative Approaches

Our society is built on consensus, and our government will emphasize and enhance co-operative approaches to problem solving. Using such positive examples as formula financing, we will seek federal co-operation to achieve our goals for the benefit of the NWT and Canada. We will work closely with aboriginal organizations to reach our mutual objectives. Clearer and more co-operative relationships will be created with community governments so that local interests are better served. Co-operation with the private sector is seen as the only viable route to economic development.

Economic Development

In pursuing new opportunities, we cannot forget our history and we must not abandon our strengths. Traditional lifestyles remain a vital part of our culture and society, and will be reinforced by developing our renewable resource sector and making innovative uses of government resources to support hunters, trappers, fishermen, artists and entertainers.

But we also must find new avenues to strengthen our economy and to assert our pivotal role in Canada's future. Developing a northern transportation system will serve both objectives by providing a basis and stimulus for future economic growth and by integrating the North into Canada's economic and political life while asserting Canadian sovereignty over arctic regions.

Other Challenges — Other Opportunities

In setting our directions, many things have been seen in a new way. Previous governments have emphasized social programs such as health, social services and public housing to meet northern needs. These important programs and services will not be neglected, but they may not expand as quickly as in the past, and may be modified and adapted so we can reach our new goals.

Resources are limited, however, and restraint is needed. New challenges such as day care will be addressed as resources are available and federal co-operation will be sought to ensure reasonable Northern access to such services. The government's over-all goals will be kept in mind in developing northern day care so that this service supports employment and training and creates meaningful jobs for Northerners.

Limits to Growth

Our territories' natural resources are great, but our government's financial resources are limited. High Northern costs and the needs of our young, rapidly growing population may exceed our ability to generate money from our tax base. In the long term, resource revenues derived from a Northern Accord may help overcome some of these limitations, but in the short term, we will need federal funds and federal co-operation, particularly to build our transportation infrastructure.

Our limited resources may make it difficult to achieve all our objectives, but we believe we can show the Government of Canada the benefits of pursuing these goals together. However, we are resolved to move ahead as much and as quickly as we are able, alone if necessary, because we believe this is the key to long-term prosperity for the Northwest Territories. To achieve our goals, we will restrain spending, cut back programs, restructure organizations and reallocate resources. We are ready to make tough decisions: where we might have said 'yes' in the past, we are prepared to say 'no' now.

Direction 1990s

Setting a government-wide direction provides the context for our decision-making for the next four years and makes all of us aware of the limitations we must place on our expectations. This document is a starting point in laying out our government's long-term goals and setting the context for further decisions. Further strategies will be developed over the coming months and years, particularly in social programs.

The economic strategies outlined here are only the first step in developing a long-term economic development plan. Participation by the Legislative Assembly's Special Committee on the Northern Economy will be important in completing that plan. The Legislative Assembly will play a major part in elaborating our goals and helping us reach a consensus on the direction for the 1990s.

We cannot move in new directions without the co-operation and participation of all parts of our society. To forge a new and better society in the Northwest Territories, our government needs the support and involvement of the Government of Canada, the NWT's aboriginal organizations, community governments, the private sector, and most importantly, of all of the citizens of the Northwest Territories.